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OLD LETTERS.

No two words could well be brought together, out of which a more pregnant meaning might be gleaned, than the above. Old letters! the very intonation of our voice as we utter them startles us. They summon up anew the long silent echoes of sounds heard only in that once world of youth—a chaos now—out of which we have passed; till, rising bodily before us, in this our later sphere, like severe rebuking spectres, come all buried joys, dead loves, sworn and forsworn friendships, and irreconcilable hates. Drag yonder chest from among the cobwebs that have gathered about it for thirty mortal years; take down the rusted key from the nail where it has hung so long. Does it grate and jar in the unused lock? What of that? The sound is significant, in perfect unison with the tone that shall vibrate through the heart's most secret chords when the mournful lid is lifted, and the indwelling spirit invoked, and the hollow sepulchre laid bare. But, courage! raise the groaning lid, and dive beneath the accumulated rubbish for the long-hoarded and long-neglected packet. Lay out, one by one before you, the motley muster-roll that holds in record the startling fictions of a life. Pah! a smell as of damp mould hangs about it like a charnel. A brave hand is needed to unloose the string: the knot resists, as though it felt the mercy of delay. But old men lack patience, and so you cut the Gordian-knot. Now, look as in a mirror, and behold. Ay, take them in order. Here is number one. The hand is bold and free, and bespeaks a heart at once frank and honest. This letter is signed Andrew. Knew you of such a name in your warm-blooded youth? Read, and tax your memory:—

MY DEAR GERVAIS—I write to you once more in the vain hope of a reply. Our school-days and school-boy promises seem to have died out together—at least on your side. Why is this? I can hardly shape my fears—but, Gervais, to speak plainly with you, I believe you love my cousin Alice. But whatever be the cause of your silence, I entreat you to end it, and to write to me; anything is better than this dead blank between us two who were once such sworn friends. If my surmise is right, pray, pray be open with me, Gervais: more, far more, hangs upon your answer than you dream of. I am too much agitated to write further. Your faithful friend,
ANDREW DUNCAN.

Be calm, old man; keep a quiet eye upon the records. What! trembling and abashed already? Does the first link of the chain electrify you? Pooh, pooh! courage. See, here is number two—a hand small and delicate, written, doubtless, with a dainty

crow-quill. These two handwritings have a strange and touching resemblance, like those of children brought up together under one roof. Was the boy the teacher of the girl? or can there be cousinship in caligraphy?

MY BELOVED GERVAIS—My cousin Andrew was here yesterday. He again questioned me closely about you, and left me in much agitation. There is some mystery between you two which I am unable to unravel. I cannot quite think with you that it is well to keep our engagement so entirely a secret; but your wishes are, and shall ever be, mine. I send this in haste, and by a trusted hand. Ever your devoted,
ALICE BLAIR.

Here follows a long hiatus. You know what comes next. The paper is black-bordered, the seal is black. It is a polite and punctilious invitation to attend the funeral of your school-friend and college-chum, Andrew Duncan. How cold it reads—like death! How unlike the hurried words leaping up from that heart now so cold and still. It gives you breathing-time. How do you employ the respite? Old man, your hands are before your face. Do you plead guilty? No!—'No, no!' you groan; 'not to this, not surely to his death; yet guilty—Oh, most guilty!' I see it all. You suspected—nay, in your secret soul, you *knew*—he loved his cousin Alice, the playmate of his childhood, the maiden-dream of his youth. But you shunned him; you shut your eyes to the knowledge. You played the craven; you quietly and secretly took the crown from his life, and set it on your own. And what was the issue to your friend? His fate in love sealed, he turned to ambition. The tale is brief enough: undue mental application, college honours heaped thickly upon him, a smile of mournful triumph, brain fever, and—death!

So many years have passed since that time, so entirely is your present man another than your past, that you wonder now, looking with strange eyes on your then world of thought and action, how such things could have been. You feel sure that you would act differently—with a nobler, higher intent, a more self-sacrificing spirit, were the thing to be done anew, the life lived over again. You see very clearly now, since the issues are before you, and each separate fate worked out, that a little plain-speaking, a little candour, a small amount of faith in yourself, a modicum of courage to meet the worst that might befall, and, above all, a spirit of reliance thirsted for, prayed for, and obtained from above, might have held together, in mutual dependence, those dropped links of happiness whose falling away so mars the beautiful chain of life. Even humanly and selfishly speaking, all might have gone equally well with you—your love-suit prospered, your

friend been reconciled, had all been conducted openly and fairly. Andrew was a youth of good promise: had you honestly told him how it stood with you, and at once shewn that Alice's affections, unconsciously drawn towards you, had justified your suit, he would at least have been spared the half-seeming and half-real treachery of his friend, and might have found a later peace in your counsel and companionship when, beneath the gentle touch of time, the barbed head of the arrow should have become a little worn down. So we can reason who stand apart, secure and out of the pale of those temptations which beset us in youth. Could we, as actors, reason thus when the time for action is before us, how few would be the follies, to say nothing of the crimes, committed in the world!

But let us dismiss this phase of error; let the worm of conscience drag it down, as a dead leaf, to serve possibly a similar purpose with the dropped autumnal foliage, in becoming the nutriment of an after and healthier state of being. Yonder lies a packet, to whose bulk other hands, your own included, have contributed. The characters writ by the strange hands are clear and legible; yours alone are blurred, blotted, scrawled, and interlined. Why, what have we here? The rise and progress of a duel!—a thing in these days almost done to death by the loud voice of public opinion, sound rationality, and, above all, Christian teaching. But stay, here is an interloper—a letter slipped by some mischance out of a different packet, and crept in among the terrors of this, like a blessing dropped unaware from lips accustomed but to cursings. It is from some forlorn recluse, some 'undone widow,' returning a mother's broken heart of thanks for a small yearly stipend bestowed on her and her children by one Gervais Headstrong. Friend Gervais, your eyes are glistening through your moistened spectacles as they meet this widow's mite of prayer and heart-blessing! Feel you not warmed and comforted to the core? Seems not your hearth more glowing, the very room where you sit and ponder more pleasant and cheery than its wont? Without, do not the very trees, bare, ice-blasted winter though it be, bud, and leaf out, and blossom before the genial warmth of one good deed? My life on it, they do, old man! And now, once more to the packet. The first on the list is a fair and business-like epistle: it runs thus:—

SIR—Yours of this morning, favoured by your intended second, Captain F., duly reached me. I accept your challenge, the time and place of your own naming. The friend who bears this is authorised to act for me in this matter, and will arrange with yours all necessary preliminaries. I am, Sir, yours, &c., ARTHUR BURT.

Passing by the remainder of those epistles which arrange, in formal and prescribed terms, the work of 'honourable' murder, let us glance at your own effusions, not those intended for the world's eye, but one written rather with a forecasting mental reference to—your (widow) that may be.

MY BELOVED WIFE—When this reaches you, it is but too probable that I shall have breathed my last. My friend, Captain F., will explain to you all the particulars of this unfortunate affair, and you will, I trust, feel that I have been in no way to blame in the matter, but have only acted as every man must act to whom the honour of his hearth is sacred. The insinuations of my antagonist with reference to you—the words uttered in a public ball-room, could be erased only by the blood of one, it may be, of both. O Alice! if you have ever doubted my love, and sometimes I have thought— But no matter: if ever I have been other to you than the fond and confiding husband I vowed to prove myself, forgive me now when all is over between us two! May Heaven bless and watch over, is the fervent prayer of your devoted husband,
GERVAIS HEADSTRONG.

But, Gervais, how came this letter in your possession, seeing that it was addressed to your wife? Methinks it was in this wise. On the untoward occasion of your meeting in Battersea Fields, somehow or other, the whole affair of the duel missed fire. Both pistols having been seized with a sudden fit of relenting, or, what is still more probable, having been somewhat diverted from their horizontal by certain qualms of conscience, acting on minds not quite dead to the perception of a law higher and holier than the duellist's so-called 'honour,' sent off each in turn a solitary signal-shot towards heaven, pleading for God's grace to spare the lives he gave from the outrage about to be committed. And so—and so—and so, the principals shook hands vigorously, and the seconds coolly and in dudgeon, as feeling themselves the more foolish party of the two; and the ground was remeasured back with more eager but less steady paces, to the now purified region of home. The thunder of the pistols had cleared the matrimonial atmosphere: the wife's honour was now intact. And the letter? Oh! next morning Captain F. found it lying somewhat crumpled, in his great-coat pocket, and gave it back to Gervais. What! and was all this amount of genuine pathos absolutely wasted? Absolutely and entirely so; for Gervais had the wisdom to keep his own counsel—his wife never heard the light passing words which had given rise to so much needless pacing of the ground, nor ever suspected, to her dying day, how nearly her good Gervais had paid dear for his strict adherence to the absurd code of men of honour.

Next in order comes a tiny packet, comprising a year by year memorial of birthday-offerings and Yuletide gifts. Each diminutive note has its appropriate hand, from the five-year child's first illegible scrawl, to the school-boy's regulation round text done in little. Painful enough memorials these! Some of the small hands whose work lies here, yellowing with the first touches of time, are still and cold now; and the fresh young hearts, whose thanks burst out so warm from the core, are gathered and garnered where time touches them not. For the loss of those younger ones who so passed away, leaving behind them yonder faded witnesses of bloom gone down to the dust, friend Gervais feels little now, so well has time done its work on him; or, at least, he feels little of that deep crushing sorrow, which visits him as his eyes light on one other and far different memorial—one, too, of more recent date, slipped in here by some such mischance, as has been already noticed, and containing not thanks but entreaties. And now, old Gervais, brace thyself up, and muster thy best strength to go through with the work before thee, for thou shalt have need of it all. This letter lying before thee is written in the man-grown hand of thy first-born and last-surviving son. Ay, look well at its concluding phrase and superscription—'Your affectionate and dutiful son, Gervais.' Yes, old man! he was the son given to your prayers, to show you all your virtues in a fairer light, teaching with the subtle beauty of youth how good a thing it is to have once been fresh in heart and blameless in spirit. How dealt you with the boy? Look well to it, and answer truly, for it is not to be done again: the time is gone—the tree is felled—the lamp burned out—the 'bowl broken at the fountain!' You are silent?—Let, then, the dead answer for the living.

MY DEAREST FATHER—I almost fear to anger you by renewing my application, since you have not answered either of my former letters; nor should I do so, but for the extreme urgency of the case, and the very awkward and humiliating position in which I find myself. I am well aware that you consider my present allowance sufficient to meet all college expenses; perhaps I should have made it suffice. I am willing to own that I may have been a little imprudent. But I found it very difficult to avoid incurring a few trifling

debts, in order to do as others do here—things absurd enough in themselves, doubtless, yet failing to do which one is called a 'milksop.' What I asked was no very heavy amount; and believe me, my dearest father, if I had thought you could not well afford to assist me at this juncture, I would have quitted college at once, and have resigned the promising future before me (and you believe that I have really worked hard), rather than make the request. At anyrate, do write to me, or I shall begin to think that I have transgressed beyond hope of pardon. Your affectionate and dutiful son,

GERVAIS.

Your old sin, again, Gervais!—failing to write; wrapping yourself up in the mantle of your own dominant will, and pride or passion of the hour. Heaven forgive you, Gervais Headstrong, for a great wrong, a crying wrong lies at your door. He is gone from you who, in your cold, selfish, worldly fashion you loved so well—or at least were so proud of. 'Ay,' you answer, 'he is gone; but his death was not of my dealing.' No: down on your bended knees for that at least! No, you did not kill him; but you broke his young spirit: you left him to disgrace and shame. He died, indeed, a natural death; but how can you look upon his grave and not shrink with loathing from yourself; you who were rolling in wealth, satiated with luxury, and yet denied out of your abundance what was fitting and right to your own flesh and blood! Close up the letter: would you could seal it for ever from your memory as from your eyes! 'Look on it again you dare not; yet at your last hour it will rise up before you; and when men shall see a slow film stealing over your death-vision, it will be that which is darkening earth and heaven to you!

Enough, Gervais; shut down the lid, turn the key, safe padlock the dread records of your past life and deeds. Roll the old worm-eaten chest back again to its lair among the dust and cobwebs, and—'to bed—to bed.'

THINGS AS THEY ARE IN AMERICA.

NEW YORK CONCLUDED.

STANDING on the steps of the Astor House, we have the thoroughfare of Broadway right and left, with the Park in front—Barnum's theatre, covered with great gaudy paintings, across the way—and can here perhaps better than anywhere else, observe the concourse of passengers and vehicles. Accustomed to the flow of omnibuses in London, the number of this variety of public conveyance though great, does not excite surprise. That which appears most novel, is the running to and fro of railway-cars on East Broadway, a thoroughfare terminating opposite to us at the extremity of the Park. Already I have spoken of a railway-train being brought in detachments by horses into the heart of the city; but this is only one of several such intrusions. Permitted, for some mysterious reason, by the civic authorities, lines of rail are laid along several prominent thoroughfares—an exceedingly convenient arrangement as regards transit from one part of the city to another, but not quite pleasant, I should think, to the inhabitants of these streets and squares through which the cars make their perambulations. The cars on these street-railways are hung low, seated like an omnibus, and will stop at any point to take up or set down passengers. The ordinary omnibuses of New York have no cab behind. The door is held close by a cord or belt from the hand of the driver, who relaxes it to allow the entry or exit of the passengers. I was amused with the manner in which the fare is taken in these vehicles. The passenger who wishes to be set down, hands his money through a hole

in the roof to the driver, who forthwith relaxes the cord, and the door flies open. As there appeared to be no check on two or more departing when only one had paid, I suppose the practice of shirking fares is not very common. I cannot say that the omnibus-system of New York is an improvement on our own. The drivers are still more unconscionable in their reception of extra passengers, particularly if the applicants be ladies. In such cases, the gentlemen either stand or take the ladies on their knee. I happened to see a cram of this kind two or three times; and I observe that the abuse forms a theme of jocular complaint in the New York newspapers.

The necessity for seeking vehicular conveyance arises not more from the extreme length of the city, than the condition of the principal thoroughfares. I am indeed sorry to hint that New York is, or at least was during my visit, not so cleanly as it might be. Statists assure us that it possesses 1500 dirt-carts, and in 1853 cost the sum of 250,000 dollars for cleaning. Where these carts were, and how all this money was expended, I cannot imagine. The mire was ankle-deep in Broadway, and the more narrow business streets were barely passable. The thing was really droll. All along the foot-pavements there stood, night and day, as if fixtures, boxes, buckets, lidless flour-barrels, baskets, decayed tea-chests, rusty iron pans, and earthenware jars full of coal-ashes. There they rested, some close to the houses, some leaning over into the gutter, some on the door-steps, some knocked over and spilt, and to get forward you required to take constant care not to fall over them. Odd as this spectacle seemed on Saturday at noon, it was still more strange on Sunday, when bells were ringing and people were streaming along to church. Passing up Broadway on this occasion, and looking into a side-street, the scene of confused debris was of a kind not to be easily forgotten—ashes, vegetable refuse, old hats without crowns, worn-out shoes, and other household wreck, lay scattered about as a field of agreeable inquiry for a number of long-legged and industrious pigs. I often laugh at the recollection of these queer displays, and wonder whether the boxes and barrels of ashes are yet removed from Broadway, or whether Pearl, Nassau, and Fulton Streets have seen the face of a scavenger!

It was a delicate subject to touch upon, but I did venture to inquire into the cause of these phenomena. One uniform answer—maladministration in civic affairs; jobbing of members of the corporation into each other's hands. Considering that the body labouring under these imputations was chosen by popular suffrage, the blame thrown upon them, I thought, was as much due to the electors as the elected. Something, in explanation, was said of the overbearing influence of the lower and more venal class of voters; but giving all due weight to an argument of this kind, it seemed to me that we had here only a vivid demonstration of that species of desertion of public duties, which is seen in London and other great marts of commerce, where men, being too busy to mind anything but their own affairs, leave the civic administration to the idle, the selfish, and incompetent. Be this as it may, things at the time of my sojourn had come to a deplorable pass. You could not take up a newspaper without seeing accounts of unchecked disorders, or reading sarcasms on official delinquencies. In the *New York Herald* for November 28, 1853, the following passages

occur in an article on Rowdies—a class of brawling reprobates who molest the public thoroughfares:—

'The insecurity of human life in New York has become proverbial; and it is a grave question with many, whether it is not practically as bad to live under the despotism of a felonious rabble as the tyranny of an aristocrat. Our police, with a few exceptions, are the worst in the world. It is a notorious fact that they are seldom in the way when crimes are committed, and when they see them by accident, they are very likely to skulk away and avoid all danger and difficulty. If a bank or some wealthy individual has lost a large sum of money, they will probably get hold of it, because they calculate upon a handsome reward. But when they know they cannot make anything extra—anything beyond their salary—there is not one in a hundred of them will give himself the least concern about the lives or limbs of the citizens who pay them for protection. We perceive that their pay has increased of late. We don't find that it has contributed very much to increase their vigilance. The whole evil lies in a nut-shell—it is the accursed system of politics that prevails at primary elections, and thence spreads its ramifications over the entire social fabric. Strike at the root, and the poison-tree will fall.'

Perhaps the most appalling feature in the economy of New York, is the number of fires, many of them involving enormous losses of property. According to an official report quoted in a newspaper, the amount of property destroyed by fire in New York in 1853, was 5,000,000 of dollars. In not a few instances, it has been feared that these conflagrations are the work of incendiaries for the sake of plunder; though I incline to the belief that they originate in a more simple cause—the headlong speed and incautiousness with which affairs are ordinarily conducted. When fires do occur, they are greatly facilitated by the slenderness of inner partitions and wooden stairs in the houses; and though the exertions of the fire-brigades are generally beyond all praise, they are not able to prevent extensive destruction and loss. The frequency of these conflagrations, which sometimes involve a sacrifice of life as well as of property, cannot, however, be said to have met with that serious attention which such grave casualties would seem to demand. The stimulus to push forward in business acting like a species of intoxication, appears to cause an indifference to misfortune. In short, there is no time to ponder over losses—no time even to avoid being cheated. An anecdote in illustration of the impetuous way in which matters are managed, was told to me as a remarkably good thing of its kind. Two men, one day, with a long ladder and proper implements, gravely proceeded to take down the metal rain-conductor from a house of business, and carried it off without question or molestation. A few days afterwards they returned, restored the tube to its place, also unchallenged, and having finished operations, presented an account for repairs, &c., which was instantly paid, the truth being that no mending was required, and the whole affair a trick; but the parties plundered had no time for inquiry, and settled the demand in order to be done with it. How many petty exactions are daily submitted to on the same principle!

As a great emporium of commerce, growing in size and importance, New York offers employment in a variety of pursuits to the skilful, the steady, and industrious, and on such terms of remuneration as leaves little room for complaint. It would, however, be a prodigious mistake to suppose that amidst this field for well-doing, poverty and wretchedness are unknown. In New York, there is a place called the Five Points, a kind of St Giles's; and here, and in some other quarters of this great city, you see and hear of a sink of vice and misery resembling the more squalid and dissolute parts of Liverpool or Glasgow. For this the

stranger is not prepared by the accounts he has received of the condition of affairs in America. Wages of manual labour, a dollar to two dollars a day. Servants, labourers, mechanics, wanted. The rural districts crying for hands to assist in clearing and cultivating the ground. Land to be had for the merest trifle. The franchise, too, that much-coveted boon, offered to all. Alas! man's destiny, on whichever side of the Atlantic, is not altogether to live by voting, but by working. What signify high wages, land, and liberty, if people shew no disposition to earn and make a proper use of these advantages—if, instead of labouring at some useful occupation, they habitually squander away existence, and do all sorts of wicked things to keep soul and body together. New York contains many thousands of this order of desperates, or call them unfortunates, if you will—men ruined by follies and crimes in the old country; 'outfitters' sent abroad by friends who wish never more to see or hear of them; refugee politicians, who, after worrying Europe, have gone to disturb America (which, fortunately, they are not able to do); beings who might have lived creditably in the Golden Age, but who possess no accurate ideas of the responsibilities of this dawning nineteenth century; immigrants weakened and demoralised by their treatment on board ship; and to sum up with an item which includes nearly everything else—intemperates living upon their wits and the bottle. Collectively forming a mass of vice and wretchedness, we have here, in fact, a 'dangerous class,' the cryptogamia of society, flourishing in dark holes and corners, just as it is seen to do in any large city of the Old World. Is it an ordination of nature that every great seat of population shall contain so much human wreck?

From whatever cause it may originate, New York is beginning to experience the serious pressure of a vicious and impoverished class. Prisons, hospitals, asylums, juvenile reformatories, alms-houses, houses of refuge, and an expensive, though strangely ineffective police, are the apparatus employed to keep matters within bounds. The governors of a cluster of penal and beneficiary institutions report, that in 1852, they expended 465,109 dollars in administering relief to 80,357 persons. Passing over any notice of the many thousands, including crowds of recently arrived immigrants, assisted by other associations, we have here a number equal to 1 in 7 of the population, coming under review as criminals or paupers in the course of a year—a most extraordinary thing to be said of any place in a country which offers such boundless opportunities for gaining a respectable subsistence. Let Europe, however, bear her proper share of the shame. Of all who pass through the prisons, or stand in need of charitable assistance, it is found that 75 per cent. are foreigners; and the cheerful and untiring manner in which relief is administered to so many worthless and unfortunate strangers, surely goes far to extenuate the reproach of 'dollar worship,' which has been cast on the American character. To fortify the weak and lift the fallen, much is humanely attempted to be done through religious agencies. Bible and tract societies, and church-missions, make extraordinary exertions; and the industrious and affluent, moved by representations from the press, are uniting in efforts for social improvement. At the time of my visit, the subject of a better class of dwellings for the working-classes was agitated; and looking at the overcrowded houses, and the excessively high rents paid, it seemed to me that a movement of this kind was desirable. Since my return home, an unsuccessful effort has been made to pass a law for shutting up the taverns (the number of which was 5980 in the early part of 1853); these establishments being believed to be a main source of all the prevalent vice and poverty in the city.

If New York has the misfortune to suffer from an accumulating mass of crime and poverty, it cannot be

said that she takes little pains to avert this calamity through the efficacy of religious ministrations or elementary education. In 1853, the city contained 254 churches, conducted, I believe, with a zeal equal to anything we can offer. From personal examination, I am able to speak with greater precision on the subject of school instruction. The educational system of New York, in its higher and lower departments, is on a singularly complete scale. Independently of a number of private academies, there are as many as 230 schools, of which twenty-two are for coloured children, in all of which education is entirely free. These free schools, which are judiciously scattered through every locality, and open to all, are supported entirely by funds granted from the revenue of the municipality—the appropriation having been 633,813 dollars, or about £125,000 sterling for the current year. Such is the considerate liberality of the city corporation in maintaining the schools and keeping up their efficiency, that one would almost be disposed to think that this much abused body is, after all, not so bad as it is called. I fear that more is done than the people properly appreciate. The registered number of pupils in the various free schools on the 1st of January 1853, was 127,237; but it appears that the average attendance was only 44,596*—a fact which throws a curious light on the method of training youth. With a profusion of schools, nothing to complain of in the routine of instruction, and nothing to pay, it is certainly strange to find that, on an average, many more than one-half of all the children nominally at school, were absent; though from what cause is not explained. According to recent accounts, it would appear that the poverty and neglect of parents rendered it as necessary in New York as in London or Edinburgh, to supplement all the ordinary means of education with a class of schools for the ragged vagrants of the streets—so close is the analogy becoming between the condition of cities in the New and Old World.†

That education of an elementary kind should be offered without charge to all classes of children, at the public expense, will not appear so surprising as that instruction even up to the higher branches of study may be obtained by any youth in New York who claims and is found prepared for receiving such a boon. I allude here to the operations of the Free Academy, which may be described as the crowning-point of the free-school system. This institution I felt much interest in visiting. It occupies a large building, more like a college than a school, and in reality is a college in all but the name. Under the superintendence of fourteen professors and a number of tutors, I found upwards of 400 youths, divided in classes and accommodated in different apartments, receiving an education of the most liberal kind at the public cost. Mathematics, Classics and modern languages, Oratory, Drawing,

Composition, and the Natural Sciences, were among the subjects taught; a large library is also open to the pupils. The annual charge on the school-fund for this academy is about 20,000 dollars. The public support of such an establishment is considered, I believe, to be of doubtful policy. The most obvious objection is, that public property is taxed to educate a select number with professional aims in view. It must, however, be borne in mind, that the child of the poorest is as eligible as the child of the most wealthy citizen; the only test for admission being the ability to pass a suitable and impartially conducted examination. I felt no small pleasure in learning that social distinction was totally unknown in the academy; and that at least thirty of the boys were the sons of persons in a humble rank of life.

The progress of refined tastes in New York has been significantly marked by the establishment of a Crystal Palace, emulative of similar constructions in Europe, and which I considered myself fortunate in arriving in time to visit. Placed in a somewhat confined situation in Reservoir Square, towards the northern extremity of the city, the edifice was not exteriorly seen to advantage, and was rather cramped in its proportions. Although considerably less in size than the Irish Exhibition, and a pigmy in dimensions as compared with the palace at Sydenham, it was, nevertheless, a fine thing of its kind, and must have furnished a fair idea of the nature and appearance of the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park. In shape it was a cross, 365 feet long each way, with a lofty dome in the centre, 100 feet in diameter. Some lesser erections filled up the angles of the cross, and with a separate building of two stories for machinery in the lower, and pictures in the upper gallery, the whole afforded space for a highly respectable exhibition. The interior arrangements and style of decoration bore a close resemblance to what was observed in the structure in Hyde Park—courts for particular classes of productions, rows of statuary, galleries with flags and drapery, and stands for the lighter articles of manufacture.

To this Exhibition, Great Britain, France, Austria, the Netherlands, and other European countries, had contributed objects of useful and ornamental art; but the bulk of the articles shewn were American, and testified to the extraordinary progress in industrial pursuits. It was observable, that this progress embraced little in pictorial art, or the higher order of design. Of the collection of 654 paintings, the greater number were from Germany, Holland, France, and England; the whole contributed by the United States being about forty. One picture I had seen previously—the First of May, by Winterhalter, which represents the Duke of Wellington presenting a casket to his godson, the young Prince Arthur; it was contributed to the Exhibition by Queen Victoria, and attracted many admirers. In the fine arts, America cannot yet be reasonably expected to rival Europe; though under the fostering influence of wealth, that rivalry will, of course, come in time. What the Americans do excel in, is the invention of tools, machinery, and miscellaneous objects directly useful. In these departments, therefore, there was material for profound meditation; and in seeing the ingenious and beautifully executed implements in wood and metal, and machines for saving and expediting labour, I wished that England had not been satisfied with deputing two or three commissioners to attend the opening of the Exhibition, but that whole companies of mechanics had come to admire and be instructed. Altogether, the Exhibition afforded a striking specimen of native skill and resources; and a conviction was left on the mind, that to treat either that skill or these resources with indifference, would be highly impolitic. Besides being much pleased with the machinery at rest and in motion, including some finely executed steam-engines, I felt much interest in the

* Annual Report of the Board of Education of the city and county of New York, 1853.

† With the princely fortunes accumulating on the one hand, and the stream of black poverty pouring in on the other, contrasts of condition are springing up as hideous as those of the Old World. . . . There should be a cure which should go to the source of our social evils in the great cities. . . . In the meantime, we call attention to the efforts now being made by various parties in our city to meet these increasing wants. A circular appears in another column from an association of ladies, acting in connection with the Children's Aid Society, which shews the character of these enterprises. A Ragged School, or, better named, an Industrial School, is opened, where the children who are too poor for the public schools are taught a common-school education and a means of livelihood. A soup-kitchen is connected with the establishment. The labour, as in the London Ragged Schools, is mostly performed by volunteers; though here entirely by ladies, often from our highest and most intelligent circles. We understand there are now eight of these schools in the city. It is a new feature in New York high life—this active labour and sympathy for the poor. Much of it may be a fashion, like most of our New York impulses; still it is a noble fashion. It is the first step towards bridging over this fearful gulf now widening between different classes.—*New York Tribune*, April 21, 1854.

extent and variety of minerals, the collection of which was remarkably perfect. Coal, salt, marbles, metals, and other articles, all found in abundance, pointed to the amount of hidden wealth in the several states. Coal of the richest kind was also exhibited from Nova Scotia; but the sight of it suggested the unpleasant reflection, that the great mineral fields of that ill-used province, gifted by a late English sovereign to a favourite, are pretty nearly useless either to the possessor or the public.

On the occasion of my visit, the Exhibition was crowded with a well-dressed and orderly company; and I should fancy that as respects the education of the eye in matters of taste, it must have been productive of good effects. Unfortunately, it proved a lamentable failure as a commercial enterprise. Originated and conducted by a joint-stock company, with only honorary patronage from government, the Exhibition, at its close, was found not to have paid its expenses—not so much from any imperfect appreciation of its merits, as from delays in opening. The design, I believe, is to reopen and permanently keep up the Exhibition with some new and attractive features, under the presidency of the immortal Barnum!

In New York, the means of social improvement, through the agency of public libraries, lectures, and reading-rooms, are exceedingly conspicuous. One of the most munificent of these institutions, is the recently opened Astor Library, founded by an endowment of the late John Jacob Astor, who bequeathed a fund of 400,000 dollars to erect a handsome building and store it with books for the free use of the public. I went to see this library, and found that it consisted of a splendid collection of 100,000 volumes, a large proportion of which were works in the best European editions, properly classified, with every suitable accommodation for literary study. The New York Mercantile Library, and the Apprentices' Library are institutions conducted with great spirit and of much value to the community. A very large and handsome building was in process of erection at a cost of 300,000 dollars, by a benevolent citizen, Mr Peter Cooper, for the purpose of a free reading-room and lectures. The limited space at my disposal does not enable me to particularise other institutions of this class, or to notice the learned societies in which the higher order of intellects co-operate.

The prevalence of education throughout the United States leads, as may be supposed, to a taste for reading, which finds the widest indulgence in easily acquired newspapers and books. Newspapers are seen everywhere in the hands of the labouring as well as the wealthy classes. Every small town issues one or more of these papers, and in large cities they are produced in myriads. In the streets, at the doors of hotels, and in railway-cars, boys are seen selling them in considerable numbers. Nobody ever seems to grudge buying a paper. In the parlours of public-houses and hotels in England, a newspaper is handed from one person to another, because the purchase of a copy would be expensive; but we see little of this practice in America. Every morning at the Astor House, I should think some hundreds of newspapers were bought by the guests. At breakfast, almost every man had a paper. And I believe I may safely aver, that no working-man of any respectability goes without his paper daily, or at least several times a week. Newspapers, in a word, are not a casual luxury, but a necessary of life in the States; and the general lowness of price of the article admits of its widest diffusion.

Many of these papers are only a cent—equal to a half-penny—each; but two or three cents are a more common price, and some are charged five or six cents. Compared with the expensively got up and well-written morning papers of London, the American

newspapers, though low-priced, are scarcely entitled to be called *cheap*. Much of their space is occupied with advertisements, and in some cases the whole readable matter amounts to a few paragraphs of news and remarks connected with party politics. Indulgence in personalities is usually, and with truth, regarded as the worst of their editorial features. In this respect, however, they cannot be said to differ materially from many of the newspapers of the British provinces; and recollecting with shame the recent libellous malignities of certain English newspapers directed against a high personage, we are scarcely entitled to speak of the editorial imperfections of the Americans as altogether singular. Such as they are, and low in price, the newspapers of the United States fulfil an important purpose in the public economy; and with all their faults, the free discussion of every variety of topic in their pages is, as some will think, better than no discussion at all. In nothing, perhaps, is there such a contrast between Great Britain and America, as in the facilities for disseminating newspapers. In the former country, newspapers can hardly be said to reach the hands of rural labourers. We could, indeed, point out several counties in Scotland which cannot support so much as a single weekly paper; but depend for intelligence on a few prints posted from a distance—such prints affording no local information, and throwing no light whatever on the peculiar, and it may be unfortunate, political and social circumstances in which the people of these counties are placed. On the other hand, such is the saliency of thought, such the freedom of action, in the United States, that a town has hardly time to get into shape before its newspaper is started; and as one always leads to two, we have soon a pair of journals firing away at each other, and keeping the neighbourhood in amusement, if not in a reasonable amount of intelligence. While it may, therefore, suit the policy of England to centralise and deal out opinion according to certain maxims of expediency, and also by every ingenious device to limit the number of newspapers, the people of the United States, taking the thing into their own hands, have organised a press as universal and accessible as the most ordinary article of daily use. On the establishment of a newspaper among them, there are no fiscal restrictions whatever. There is no stamp, and, consequently, no vexatious government regulations requiring to be attended to—no particular form of imprint necessary. Exempted likewise from paper-duty, and never having been burdened with a tax on advertisements, they are in every sense of the word free. The transmission of newspapers by post in the United States is on an equally simple footing. A newspaper despatched to any place within the state in which it is published, is charged only half a cent (a farthing) for postage, and when sent to any other part of the United States, a cent; but in this latter case, if a quantity be paid for in advance, the cost is only the half-cent. It is proper to state, that these charges do not include delivery at the houses of the parties addressed—that being the subject of a separate small fee; and it is here, both as regards letters and newspapers, that the superiority of the British post-office system is conspicuous.

Decentralising in principle, the newspaper system of the States still relies for the more important items of home and foreign intelligence on the prints of the large cities, which spare neither pains nor expense, by electric-telegraph or otherwise, in procuring the earliest and most exciting news. In this respect, New York may be said to take the lead, by means of several newspapers conducted with a remarkable degree of energy—among which may be noticed the *Herald*, *Tribune*, *Post*, and *Commercial Advertiser*. In connection with this prominent feature of New York, it seems proper to state that this city has latterly acquired importance, if not for literary production, at least for the dispersion of

books; encroaching, so far, on the older literary marts of Boston and Philadelphia. Periodically in New York there occur great sales by auction to the trade—not of mere parcels of books, but whole editions prepared for the purpose, and transmitted from publishing houses in different parts of the Union. These sales, like the book-fairs of Leipzig, attract purchasers from great distances, and literary wares are disposed of on a scale of extraordinary magnitude. New York likewise possesses a number of publishers of books, original and reprinted, though, so far as I could judge, the works, generally, are not of the same high-standing as those which are issued from the long-established and classic press of Boston. As a place of publication, New York is best known for its periodicals, of which, with newspapers included, there are as many as a hundred and fifty addressed to every shade of opinion.

By the politeness of Mr Dana, I was conducted over the printing establishment of the *Tribune*, and had pointed out to me a machine resembling one I saw several years ago in the *Times* printing-office, and which was turning out broadsheets with inconceivable rapidity. At the large book-manufacturing concern of the Messrs Harpers, which I visited a few days previous to the fire, the machinery employed was more novel. Thirty-four flat-pressure steam-presses, all afterwards destroyed, were producing the finest kind of work, such as is still effected only by hand-labour in England, into which country the inventor, Adams of Boston, would doubtless be doing a service to introduce them. The practice of stereotyping by an electric process, so as to multiply plates at a small cost, and as yet scarcely known in England, was also in use at the same office. The enormous demand for every moderate-priced product of the press, has, of course, necessitated the resort to these simplifications of labour. The circulation of *Harpers' Magazine* is stated to be upwards of 100,000 copies, which no hand-labour could produce, nor cylinder-printing properly effect, considering the fineness of the wood-engravings usually interspersed through the letter-press. Unfortunately, with every disposition to admire the vigour displayed by the Harpers in conducting their popular miscellany, one can entertain little respect for a work which systematically adopts articles, often without acknowledgment, from English periodicals. Occupying a much higher literary status, is the monthly magazine, started a year ago by Mr G. P. Putnam, whose efforts in cultivating native American talent, and in sustaining a work of a purely original character, will, we hope, be crowned with the success which they deserve.

In the course of my rambles through the printing-offices of New York, I alighted upon an establishment in which the *Household Words* of Mr Dickens was furnishing employment to one of the presses. As yet, the present sheet had been exempted from sharing in the glory of an unauthorised transatlantic impression, and I had reason for gratulation accordingly. But who can tell what a few days may bring forth? Since my return to England, *Chambers's Journal* has yielded to its destiny, and, side by side with Mr Dickens's popular print, affords what is thought a fair ground for enterprise to a publisher in New York. It has sometimes been remarked of George III., that instead of fighting his American subjects, he would have shewn somewhat more prudence by removing, family, court, and all, to the States; and so leaving Great Britain, as the lesser country, to shift for itself, as a colony. Some such plan of packing up and removal might almost be recommended to persons designing to follow out a course connected professionally with any department of literature. Already, certain English publishing-houses are turning attention to the great and ever-extending field of enterprise in the United States, where books, as in the case of newspapers, are not a luxury of the rich, but a necessary part of the house-

hold furniture of those depending for subsistence on daily labour. With a view to partaking in the advantages to be derived from the universal demand for literary products in the States, some kind friends strongly counselled the transference of myself bodily to New York; and though coming rather late in the day, the idea was not without its allurements. In one respect, at least, the American possesses an advantage over the English publisher: he is not subjected to heavy taxation in carrying on his operations. When I mentioned to the publishers of New York, that the various works issuing from the establishment with which I was connected, and addressed mainly to classes to whom it was of importance to the state itself that literature should be made as accessible as possible, were loaded with a tax of 10,000 dollars per annum in the form of paper-duty, no small wonder was expressed. 'Why,' said they, 'continue to spend your existence in a country in which the earnings of industry are laid under such heavy contributions?' The inquiry might more pertinently have been put to a younger man, or to one who had fewer inducements to 'stick to the old ship;' but it is exactly the kind of question which, considered in its different aspects, is now drawing away so many eager minds across the Atlantic.

W. C.

• SHAMYL.

THE mountain-chief, whose exploits for so many years have won the admiration of Europe, Shamyl, the warrior-prophet of the Caucasus, was born towards the end of the last century, at a town called Himri, situated in one of the wildest parts of Circassia. He was early educated in the two chief departments of Oriental knowledge—religion and arms; and many traits of truly Spartan courage are related of him. On one occasion, while a mere child, he was attacked and wounded by some comrades; but although his life was endangered, he continued to conceal what had happened, because he would not consent to admit that he had been vanquished even by numbers.

For a long time Shamyl occupied a comparatively subordinate position as one of the Murides, or body-guards of Hamsad Bey, the Imam. It was only after the assassination of that chief, in one of the civil contests which weakened Circassia and favoured the advance of Russia, that the celebrated warrior made himself known. He was elected to succeed the fallen Imam by general acclamation, and having ruthlessly avenged the crime that had been committed, began that career which has since obtained for him a world-wide renown. The means by which he obtained his popularity are not well known. As yet, we are in possession only of fragments of Circassian history for the last twenty years. But it appears certain that Shamyl, though stained by many grievous faults, possesses noble qualities, and is eminently fitted to rule over a barbarous people.

He is of middle height, with gray eyes and red hair. His complexion is white, and as delicate as that of the Circassian beauties who are sometimes exposed for sale in the private bazaars of Constantinople. Perhaps the contrast of his feminine appearance with his extraordinary courage and impassibility in the presence of danger, may have strongly contributed to excite admiration among his rude and swarthy countrymen. All reports speak of him as gentle even when ordering acts of the greatest cruelty. He is sober in food; and scrupulously obeys the injunction of the Prophet, to drink no wine—allowing his followers, however, full liberty to intoxicate themselves. A few hours of sleep

suffice for him; and whilst his full-fed body-guard snore around, he rises, and somewhat ostentatiously employs himself in reading and prayer. A poet of Daghestan has said, that 'he has lightning in his eyes and flowers on his lips;' for, like all popular leaders, he has the gift of eloquence, and gains his victories as much by oratory as generalship. All his proclamations are in gorgeous language; and it is said that nothing can equal the effect of the short orations he delivers to his troops before he leads them on to victory.

The first residence of Shamil, after he was raised to supreme rank, was Achulgo, where he built, in the centre of the fortress, a little house in the European style, with the assistance of Russian prisoners and deserters. Here he lived in the humblest possible style, depending even for daily bread on the spontaneous offerings of his people. The fortress is built of the rudest rocks; and in 1839 was surrounded by defences of earth, with passages, covered-ways, and moats, according to the best rules of science. The solid wooden towers, useless against artillery, had been removed, so that when General Grabbe appeared before it, after having taken Arquani and forced the passage of the Koi-sou, he at once understood the necessity of a regular siege. His first impulse, indeed, was to retreat; but remembering the orders of the emperor, hoping, too, to terminate the war with glory by the capture of Shamil, he determined on an attack. The difficulties to be overcome were immense; but the troops under his command were numerous, and accustomed to passive obedience. The mountaineers by degrees found their communications cut off. They were completely surrounded, and hunger and thirst began to tell upon them with more fatal effect even than the dreaded cannon of their enemies.

It was on the 23d of August 1839, that the advanced ramparts having been taken, the Russian general ordered his men to storm the citadel. The Circassians now displayed almost supernatural courage. Even the women took part in the struggle, sword and pistol in hand. 'Never,' says a Russian eye-witness, 'have I beheld so horrible a spectacle. We swam in blood. We climbed over barricades of men. The death-rattle was our martial music. I was clambering at the head of my battalion, already decimated, up a steep ascent; the cannon had ceased to roar—the wind blew away the sombre curtain of smoke: we suddenly beheld on a platform overhanging an abyss, a number of Circassian women. They knew that victory had declared against them, but firmly resolved to perish rather than fall into the hands of the Russians. They rolled enormous blocks of stone from the summit of the precipice. A huge mass whirled past me, and carried away several of my soldiers. I thought of the Eumenides. In the heat of the conflict, they had thrown away their tunics; and their hair streamed wildly over their bare shoulders. I saw a young woman sitting down quietly with her infant in her arms; suddenly, as we approached, she arose, dashed her infant's head against a rock, and then leaped with it into the abyss below. The others followed one by one, and all were dashed to pieces.'

The great object of this sanguinary attack was to take Shamil; but the prophet was found neither among the dead nor among the wounded. A whisper went abroad that he was concealed in a cave, and every rock was searched without success. Towards midnight, some sentinels heard a noise. A man descended a precipice by means of a cord. When down, he examined the ground, gave a signal, and immediately came a second, and then a third wrapped in a white cloak, such as Shamil was accustomed to wear. The Russians now disclosed themselves, and took all three prisoners. But their joy threw them off their guard; and the real Shamil—for he in the white cloak was only a decoy—darted by, leaped into the Koi-sou, and swam across

untouched by the shower of balls sent after him. This wonderful escape of course added to the prophet's reputation; and it is not surprising that his people believe him to be the especial favourite of Allah. The lovers of the marvellous pretend that on one occasion Shamil allowed himself to be taken prisoner under another name, was conducted to St Petersburg, obtained the rank of colonel in the army, and having learned the art of war and the secrets of the enemy, escaped back to his own country. This extraordinary man, however, has no need of fiction to exalt his merits as a patriot-chief.

Having been driven out of Achulgo, Shamil removed his residence to a place called Dargy Wedenno, situated in the midst of dense forests and frightful precipices. It is from this place that he has since, with various success, directed the operations of the war, issuing forth at critical periods, and exciting his people by his presence, but taking care not needlessly to expose his person, or to diminish the prestige of his name by too frequent appearances. Sometimes he has been reduced almost to the last extremity of despair. The Russian general, Woronzoff, by far the most formidable enemy ever sent against Circassia, cut roads through the country; and instead of making periodical attacks on a grand scale, endeavoured to weary out the mountaineers by constantly marching to and fro in every direction. Many tribes were entirely surrounded and compelled to submit; and at length the Tchetches found themselves unable to maintain their independence. They resolved, therefore, to send ambassadors to Shamil, asking him either to come and assist them, which they knew he could not, or to allow them to submit to Russia. No one, however, would venture voluntarily to carry such a message; and four men were chosen by lot. They set out for Dargy, and determined by means of gold to buy the intercession of the mother of Shamil, that he should at least hear what they had to say, and accept or refuse. They easily succeeded in inducing the poor old woman to speak to her son. What passed at the interview was kept a secret; but horrible results were feared, for the prophet immediately afterwards retired to the mosque to fast and to pray. He remained there until late next morning; and then appearing amidst a general assembly which he had ordered to be called together, announced, with many circumlocutions, that the Tchetches had formed the infamous project of submitting to the Giaours; that they had sent messengers to plead their excuse; that these messengers had suborned a woman to make him the disgraceful communication; that he had asked counsel of the Prophet; and that the Prophet had ordered him, from Allah, to give a hundred lashes with a whip to the woman who had been suborned. 'That woman,' he added in a terrific voice, 'is my mother!' There was a thrill of expectant horror, and the mother of Shamil, with a shriek, fell upon the ground. The stern chieftain continued: 'What was my amazement when I heard this order! I wept bitter tears. Mohammed then obtained from Allah that I might substitute myself for the sinner. I am ready!' So saying he descended from his position, and ordered two of his guards to perform the office of executioner upon him. They refused at first, but were compelled to obey. At the fifth blow, the blood started; but the people now rushed forward, snatched the whips from the hands of the men, and insisted that so painful a scene should not continue. The Tchetch ambassadors now expected that their time was come; but to their surprise, and that of every one, Shamil pardoned them, and said: 'Go back to your cowardly countrymen, and tell them what you have seen!'

It would be impossible, within any reasonable space, to give an outline of the various operations which Shamil has directed against the Russians. Indeed, accurate details are not yet known; and it is to be

feared that tradition alone will hand them down to posterity. But it is not only as a warrior and enthusiast that Shamyl is distinguished; he is remarkable also as a legislator. By his influence, the people of Daghestan, previously divided into rival sects and tribes, have been melted down into a mass almost homogeneous; and he has established many useful institutions. His country is partitioned into twenty provinces, each under its naib or governor. Four of them are invested with absolute authority; the others are obliged to give periodical reports of their actions. Each naib is obliged to raise 300 horsemen, one from every ten families under his jurisdiction. The soldier's family is exempt from all taxes: the others pay his expenses. Every man, however, from fifteen to fifty, is, properly speaking, a soldier, ready to act on any great emergency. Shamyl himself has a body-guard of 1000 men, kept under rules of monastic severity. By their means he restrains the insubordination of such amongst his people as occasionally grow impatient of his iron yoke. Formerly, all contributions were voluntary; at present, a regular system of taxation has been introduced. If, therefore, at any future period Circassia is relieved from external pressure, it may be found that the foundations of a durable state have been laid. For the first time has any organisation been successfully introduced. Yet it is possible that when the immediate motive for union has been removed, discord may again reign. Some incompetent person may succeed to Shamyl before the people have become completely accustomed to order; so that we cannot foretell with any degree of certainty what may be the future fortunes of Daghestan.

PANOPTICS AND POLYTECHNICS.

THERE is a building of somewhat pretentious character in Leicester Square, which has just now put forth its claim to a share of the shillings appropriated by the world for rational amusement. This building is the 'Panopticon of Science and Art'—a sort of superior 'Polytechnic,' built by a company or society who seem to aim at something more than has been realised in the older institution.

These establishments are not unimportant as a token of the spirit of the age. The puppet-show and the dancing-dolls are giving way to something better in the way of mechanical ingenuity; while the really good music now to be heard almost nightly at Exeter Hall and St Martin's Hall, is certainly better than anything which the middle classes were accustomed to listen to a few years ago. It may be not the less true, at the same time, that the diminution of rural sports in the country districts is somewhat to be regretted, leaving the country people little else to depend upon for recreation than the village alehouse. In towns, however, and especially in such a world of a place as London, it is out of the question to look for such things. We cannot have primitive open-air sports in the metropolis, to any great extent: there is not room for them, and, moreover, the hours of work leave very little time for their enjoyment. Our recreation must be chiefly within walls and under roofs—more is the pity, some will say; but it is useless to kick against the irresistible necessities of a monster-city covering more than sixty square miles; we must bend to those necessities, and must see how to bend in the most rational manner and to the most useful purpose.

Exhibitions akin to the Polytechnic and the Panopticon are altogether of modern growth; they may be said to have only commenced in the boyhood of those

who are now but in middle life. In France, the system began earlier than in England, under the auspices—as most great undertakings are in France—of the government.

Exhibitions of manufactures and pieces of mechanism may perhaps be said to have commenced, in England, by the establishment of the Museum of the Society of Arts. Many thousands have seen this, and many more might see it than seem to be aware of the fact, for the society offer many facilities for the admission of strangers. This old museum, with its raw materials and its models of machines, is worthy of a visit. The same society has lately established special exhibitions, illustrative of some special branch of art or science, which seem likely to have a wide sphere of utility. The museums and exhibitions of the Asiatic Society, of the East India Company, of the United Service Institution, of Economic Geology, of Marlborough House, of Gore House—all, to a certain degree, may be regarded as exhibitions of science and art, belonging to certain permanent bodies. But besides these, there have been others which have either been private speculations, or have had relation to some special purpose at a particular time and in a particular place. Before the establishment of the Adelaide Gallery, there was an exhibition of science and art in a building on the site of the present National Gallery; it was a humble affair, but interesting of its kind, and did something towards creating a taste for this kind of instructive amusement. The Adelaide Gallery—with its steam-gun, its combustion of steel, and its manufacturing illustrations—will be fresh in the memory of many visitors to London. Why it is that the Gallery has ceased to be a science and art room, to become a music and dancing room, it is not for us to say: probably questions of pounds, shillings, and pence have had a controlling influence here as elsewhere. A more powerful body established afterwards the Polytechnic Institution in Regent Street—an institution which for many years has given a most ample shillingworth of instruction and amusement to those who have chosen to enter its doors, and which seems to become stronger instead of weaker, as it becomes older. There is a more obvious attempt here to combine science and fine arts with manufactures, than in the exhibitions hitherto noticed. The Great Free-trade Bazaar at Covent Garden Theatre, nine years ago, was a remarkable example of collected industrial products. The occasion was a special one, and the display was more purely industrial or manufacturing than anything to which we had before been accustomed. Not only has the metropolis had these opportunities of seeing exhibitions of manufactures, but the provinces occasionally share in the advantage. There was an Exposition of Industrial Art at Manchester in 1846; there was an exposition at Birmingham in 1849; there have been polytechnic exhibitions at Liverpool and at Leeds; there was a small Dublin Exhibition in 1850, and a great Dublin Exhibition in 1853; and there have been exhibitions and expositions, polytechnic, industrial, and scientific, in a large number of towns within the last ten years. Some of these have been a kind of pleasure-soirées, while others have had direct relation to the shillings and sixpences received at the doors; but all have been entirely independent of any aid from the government; and in this respect they contrast strikingly with the expositions of France. The nature and character of these polytechnic exhibitions—such as were opened at Leeds and Liverpool some years ago—were pretty fully described in a paper in the Second

Series of the Journal (No. 14), to which we may here refer the reader.

It will be seen, from this sketch, that we associate the new Panopticon with these industrial and artistic exhibitions. It is indeed an example of that which the vast Sydenham Palace is intended to be—an attempt to combine science and fine art and productive industry, so far as illustrative examples are concerned, under one roof. The Panopticon, according to its full title, is an 'Institution for Scientific Exhibitions, and for promoting discoveries in Arts and Manufactures.' About four years ago—for indeed the preparation of the building and its contents has been a very lengthy affair—a royal charter was obtained, which set forth the objects of the institution yet more fully. They were declared to be—'To exhibit and illustrate, in a popular form, discoveries in science and art; to extend the knowledge of useful and ingenious inventions; to promote and illustrate the application of science to the useful arts; to instruct, by courses of lectures, to be demonstrated and illustrated by instruments, apparatus, and other appliances, all branches of science, literature, and the fine and useful arts; to exhibit various branches of the fine and mechanical arts, manufactures, and handicrafts, by shewing the progress to completion in the hands of the artisan and mechanic; to exhibit the productions of nature and art, both British and foreign; to illustrate history, science, literature, and the fine and useful arts, by pictorial views and representations; to illustrate the science of acoustics by lectures, music, and otherwise; to give instruction in the various branches of science and the mechanical arts; to afford to inventors and others facilities to test the value of their ideas by means of the machinery, instruments, and other appurtenances of the institution; and, generally, to extend and facilitate a greater knowledge and love of the arts and sciences on the part of the public.' This is indeed a long programme; and any institution which realises all these aims will be panoptic, pan-technic, polyoptic, and polytechnic, all in one. The projector and present managing director of the institution is Mr E. M. Clarke, who has served a long apprenticeship in such matters. Nearly thirty years ago, he was instrumental in establishing the first mechanics' institution in Ireland; in 1830, he took part in the Exhibition of Science and Art, at the spot where now the National Gallery stands, and afterwards in the establishment of the Adelaide Gallery; and he was one of the small body who originated the Polytechnic Institution. The Panopticon sets forth a formidable body of honorary officials; there are nearly twenty patrons, nearly as many members of the council, about thirty associates, who are philosophers, musicians, sculptors, painters, and literati, besides the paid officers. What the duties of the associates are, we do not at present see.

It is obvious, on a first visit, that only a portion of the objects of the institution can at present be carried out; it seems as if it will require time for its development. This much may be said, however, that the Panopticon appeals to the eye and the ear in a very striking and original manner. Looking at the front of the building as it presents itself on the east side of Leicester Square, we see a bold attempt to adopt the Saracenic or Moorish style of architecture. There is a façade of eleven windows in width, and five stories in height; some of the windows are ornamented with the Moorish arch, some with arabesque ornament, while the porch or doorway displays the Moorish form still more decidedly. Over the two extreme ends of the building are two minarets; and over the centre, somewhat in the rear, is the cupola or summit of a large rotunda. Whether this ornate and Oriental-looking façade, resplendent with gilding and bright colours, assorts well with the plain ugly English houses on either side, is quite another matter; it is difficult to

say what that is beautiful can assort well with the frontage of London houses. The escutcheons of Purcell, Davy, Newton, Goldsmith, Herschel, Shakspeare, Barry, Watt, and Bacon, take part in the decorations of the façade. The Moorish porch is so far an example of modern art, that it is formed chiefly of Ransome's artificial stone, inlaid with Minton's encaustic tiles. Within, or rather under the arch of the porch, is a sort of arabesque porticulis, in cast iron. The porch gives entrance to a vestibule, glittering on every side with adornments in variegated alabaster and encaustic tiles; and beyond this is an inner porch, leading from the vestibule to the grand rotunda.

This rotunda is the *magnum opus*, the work to which the time, and the money, and the skill of the Institution have been mainly directed. A gorgeous and striking chamber it certainly is. Consistently with its name, it is circular, and is surmounted by a cupola. The diameter and the height are each nearly 100 feet. There are three galleries at different heights; and what with the pillars by which these galleries are supported, the Moorish arches by which the pillars are surmounted, the arabesque ornaments by which the interior of the cupola is completely covered, the gilding, and painting, and glass about the pillars and galleries, and the Oriental lamps whereby the whole is lighted in the evening—the effect is exceedingly novel. The floor is for the most part boarded; but in the centre is an elaborately inlaid basin, whence springs up a fountain-jet to a height of eighty or ninety feet, and eight minor jets to half this height; the water is derived from an Artesian well, 346 feet deep; the mosaic of the basin consists chiefly of enamelled slate, bordered with coloured-glass tessellation—an ancient art, which has only been lately revived in England.

With what, then, is this remarkable rotunda filled, and how does it subserve the objects of the institution? First, and before everything else, both for sight and sound, is the organ—an instrument worth a visit, if there were nothing else to see. Messrs Hill were required to make an organ which should fill the building with a vast body of rich sound, and at the same time harmonise in appearance with the peculiar style of decoration around. Both of these behests have been admirably attended to. The organs at Birmingham and York are grand productions; but this at the Panopticon is said to exceed them both in tone and in compass. It is difficult to make organ phraseology intelligible to ordinary readers; but those who know a little concerning the mechanism of an organ, will understand us perhaps when we say, that the organ has four manuals or key-boards; that each manual extends from CC to A in alt; that there is also a pedal-organ of 30 notes; that there are 60 stops, 7 couplers, 10 composition pedals, 1 crescendo pedal, and 4004 pipes (the *Handbook* of the Panopticon will puzzle some of its readers by the announcement that the number of pipes is 4,0004); that there are 7 bellows; that these bellows are worked by steam-power; that the swell, choir, and solo organs have duplicate manuals, so that three performers can play together if desirable; that there is a pneumatic arrangement of the key and draw stops, which lessen the physical exertion of the player; and that the dimensions of the instrument are 36 feet wide, 48 high, and 28 deep. The organ occupies a recess on the eastern side of the rotunda; and its own adornments, as well as those of the recess which contains it, add greatly to the beauty of the rotunda. But it is when the organ speaks with its many-toned voice that it becomes a thing of power. Under the skilful fingers of Mr Best, its grandeur, sweetness, and variety of tone appeal irresistibly to the ear; the sounds wind round the circular saloon, and come to every hearer with extraordinary richness.

We can hardly help thinking that this organ will kill everything else in the building. This is a matter,

however, which every visitor must decide for himself. The contents of the rotunda also may be regarded as pertaining to three classes—the artistic, the scientific, and the industrial. The artistic or fine-art productions are chiefly sculptures and copies of sculptures, some of them placed under crimson and gold canopies in somewhat theatrical style. The scientific productions comprise enormous electrical and galvanic apparatus, electric-telegraphs, optical apparatus, diving-bell apparatus, and—in the uppermost gallery—a photographic collection. The industrial productions and specimens are represented by a series of Whitworth's metal-working machines, an ascending room worked by steam-power, a subaqueous balloon, a carbonic acid apparatus, a freezing apparatus, pin-making and needle-making machines, sewing and weaving machines, parquetry, ornamental turning and fret-cutting, hat-making, bead-purse making, fringe-making, papier-mâché, &c. Except Whitworth's machines, and some agricultural implements, most of these workmen's and tradesmen's stalls and counters are in the galleries.

As it is not in mortals to achieve perfection, it may not be wondered at if there be some little drawbacks in this splendid rotunda. Its very rotund form—a source of so much beauty, is also a source of some defects, both to the ear and the eye. First, in respect to the ear: Every one who has been in the Whispering Gallery at St Paul's, knows that sound is conducted and augmented in an extraordinary manner by the circular form of the building. Now, at the Panopticon the same thing is observable, in a smaller degree: all the sounds, pleasant or not, become very audible. It was our fortune to hear, on one occasion, while Mr Best was playing Mozart's magnificent *Qui s'degno* on the magnificent organ, a clacking accompaniment of weavers' shuttles, in a stall some ten or twelve yards from the organ. In a building of different shape, the sound of the shuttle might be buried in a little receptacle of its own; but in this rotunda no sound can be buried. It is possible that some mode of obviating this defect may be adopted when the institution gets into complete working-order. In respect to the eye, the circular form of the rotunda renders it difficult so to separate the articles exhibited that the artistic, the scientific, and the industrial may be viewed separately: all these may be interesting and valuable, but they do not suit well when mingled up together. From one point of view, an electric-telegraph, a sculptured group, an iron-planing machine, an optical instrument, a statue under a crimson canopy, and an assemblage of pitchforks, and rakes, and shovels—all meet the eye at once; nor do we well see how this incongruity is to be avoided, if all three classes of objects are illustrated in one circular room. All this may, however, be susceptible of improved arrangement when the plans of the institution are more fully carried out.

The rotunda is, as we have said, the chief room in the building; but there are others of subordinate character. There are two lecture-rooms or theatres—one for scientific illustrations, and one for literary and musical entertainments. In front of the organ is a spacious platform or music-room, in which it is proposed that Mr Best shall give instructions in organ-playing at hours when the public exhibition is not open. At the top of the building is a photographic department, where portraits are taken, and where instructions are given in this beautiful art. There is a laboratory in the lower part of the building, where instructions are to be given in chemical science, and analyses conducted.

Whether we regard the Panopticon as a scientific institution, with a little music and sculpture thrown in to lighten it; or as a graceful artistic exhibition, with a little science and manufactures thrown in to give it serious and solid import; or as an attempt to combine

the light and graceful with the solid and useful on equal terms—it must be regarded as a welcome addition to our metropolitan pleasure-spots. No disrespect to an old acquaintance, the Polytechnic, however: there is room for both.

THE THIRTEENTH JUROR.

WHEN the criminal, Pierre Granger, escorted by four gendarmes, was placed in the dock of the court of assize, there was a general stir amongst the crowd, which had assembled from every quarter to be present at his trial.

Pierre Granger was not an ordinary culprit, not one of those poor wretches whom the court, as a matter of form, furnishes with an advocate, judges in the presence of a heedless auditory, and sends to oblivion in the convict prisons of the state. He had figured at length in the columns of the newspapers; and while M. Léprevier had undertaken his defence, M. Tourangin, the attorney-general, was to conduct the prosecution. Now, at the time of which I write, these two men stood at the head of their profession. Whenever it was known that they were to be pitted against each other in any cause, crowds immediately flocked to enjoy their eloquent sentences, sonorous periods, and phrases as round and as polished as so many billiard-balls. It was a perfect riot of tropes and figures, a delicious confusion of periphrases and metaphors. All the figures of rhetoric defied before the charmed auditory, and sported, jested, and struggled with each other, like Virgil's playful shepherds. There was a luxury of epithets, passing even that of the Abbé Delille. Every individual substantive was as regularly followed by its attendant adjective, as the great lady of the last century by her train-bearing page. In this pompous diction—a man became a mortal; a horse, a courser; the moon was styled pale Dian. My father and my mother were never called so, but invariably the authors of my being; a dream was a vision; a glass, a crystal vase; a knife, a sword; a car, a chariot; and a breeze became a whirlwind; all which, no doubt, tended to produce a style of exceeding sublimity and beauty. Pierre Granger was a clumsily-built fellow, five feet ten in height, thirty-eight years old, with foxy hair, a high colour, and small cunning gray eyes. He was accused of having strangled his wife, cut up the body into pieces, and then, in order to conceal his crime, set fire to the house, where his three children perished. Such an accumulation of horrors had shed quite a romantic halo round their perpetrator. Ladies of rank and fashion flocked to the jail to look at him; and his autograph was in wonderful request, as soon as it became known that Madame Cézarine Langelot, the lioness of the district, possessed some words of his writing in her album, placed between a ballad by a professor of rhetoric and a problem by the engineer-in-chief of the department; neither gentlemen, to say the truth, being much flattered by such close juxtaposition with the interesting pet-prisoner.

When Pierre Granger, with his lowering brow and air of stolid cunning, was placed in the dock, the names of twelve jurors were drawn by lot, and the president demanded of the counsel on either side, whether they wished to exercise their right of challenge. Both declined offering any objection to twelve such honourable names; but the attorney-general added, that he would require the drawing of a supplementary juror. It was done, and on the paper appeared the name of Major Vernor. At the sound, a slight murmur was heard amongst the spectators, while MM. Tourangin and Léprevier exchanged a rapid glance, which seemed to say: 'Will not you challenge him?' But neither of them did so; an officer conducted Major Vernor into his appointed place, and amid profound silence the indictment was read.

Major Vernor had lived in the town during the last two years. Every one gave him the military title, yet none could tell when, or where, or whom he had served. He seemed to have neither family nor friends; and when any of his acquaintances ventured to sound him on the subject, he always replied in a manner by no means calculated to encourage curiosity. 'Do I trouble my head about *your* affairs?' he would say. 'Your shabby old town suits me well enough as a residence, but if you don't think I have a right to live in it, I shall be most happy to convince you of the fact at daybreak to-morrow morning with gun, sword, or pistol.' Major Vernor was precisely the very man to keep his word: the few persons who had entered his lodgings, reported that his bedroom resembled an armoury, so fully was it furnished with all sorts of murderous weapons. Notwithstanding this, he seemed a very respectable sort of man, regular in his habits, punctual in his payments, and fond of smoking excellent cigars, sent him, he used to say, by a friend in Havannah. He was tall, excessively thin, bald, and always dressed in black; his moustaches curled to a point; and he invariably wore his hat cocked over his right ear. In the evenings, he used to frequent the public reading-room of the town; but he never played at any game, or conversed with the company, remaining absorbed in his newspaper until the clock struck ten, when he lit his cigar, twisted his moustaches, and with a stiff, silent bow took his departure. It sometimes happened that one of the company, bolder than the others, said: 'Good-night, major!' Then the major would stop, fix his gray eye on the speaker, and reply: 'Good-night, monsieur;' but in so rude and angry a tone, that the words sounded more like a malediction than a polite salutation.

It was remarked, that whoever thus ventured to address the major, was, during the remainder of the evening, the victim of some strange ill-luck. He regularly lost at play, was sure to knock his elbow through a handsome lamp or vase, or in some way to get entangled in a misadventure. So firmly were the good townfolk persuaded that the major possessed an 'evil eye,' that their common expression, when any one met with a misfortune, was: 'He must have said "good-night" to the major!'

This mysterious character dined every day at the ordinary of the Crown Hotel, and although habitually silent, seemed usually contented with the fare. One day, however, after having eaten some bread-soup, he cast his eye along the table, frowned, and calling the host, said: 'How comes it that the dinner to-day is entirely meagre?'

'Monsieur, no doubt, forgets that this is Good-Friday.'

'Send me up two mutton chops.'

'Impossible, major; there is not an ounce of meat to be had at any butcher's in the town.'

'Let me have some fowl.'

'That is not to be had either.'

'What a set of fools!' exclaimed the major, striking his clenched hand on the table with such force that the bottles reeled and rocked, just as if all the wine in their bodies had got into their heads. Then he called the waiter, and said: 'Baptiste, go to my lodging, and bring me the inlaid carabine which hangs over my pillow.'

The poor host trembled, and grew very pale, when Baptiste returned with a double-barrelled gun, beautifully inlaid with silver. The major coolly examined the locks, put on fresh caps, cocked both barrels, and walked out, followed at a respectful distance by the guests and inmates of the hotel. Not far off stood an old ivy-mantled church, whose angular projections were haunted by many ravens: two large ones flew out of a turret just as the major came up and took aim for a double shot. Down tumbled both the unclean birds at his feet.

'*Sacrebleu!*' cried he, picking them up; 'I'm regularly sold—they're quite lean!'

He returned to the hotel, and, according to his express orders, one moiety of his ill-omened booty was dressed in a savoury stew, and the other simply roasted. Of both dishes he partook so heartily, that not a vestige of either remained, and he declared that he had never eaten more relishing food.

From that day the major became an object of uneasiness to some, of terror to others, of curiosity to all. Whenever he appeared on the public promenade, every one avoided him; at the theatre, his box was generally occupied by himself alone; and each old woman that met him in the street, invariably stopped to cross herself. Major Vernor was never known to enter a church, or accept an invitation: at first, he used to receive a good many of these, and the perfumed billets served him to light his cigars.

Such, then, was the thirteenth jury drawn in the cause of Pierre Granger, and it may easily be understood why the audience were moved at hearing the name of Major Vernor.

The paper of accusation, notwithstanding, drawn up by the attorney-general with a force and particularity of description which horrified the ladies present, was read amid profound silence, broken only by the snoring of the prisoner, who had deliberately settled himself to sleep. The gendarmes tried to rouse him from his unnatural slumber, but they merely succeeded in making him now and then half-open his dull brutish eyes.

When the clerk had ceased to read, Pierre Granger was with difficulty thoroughly awakened, and the president proceeded to question him. The interrogatory fully revealed, in all its horror, the thoroughly stupid fiendishness of the wretch. He had killed his wife, he said, because they couldn't agree; he had set his house on fire, because it was a cold night, and he wanted to make a good blaze to warm himself: as to his children, they were dirty squalling little things—no loss to him or to any one else.

It would be tedious to pursue all the details of this disgusting trial. M. Tourangin and M. Lépevier both made marvellously eloquent speeches, but the latter deserved peculiar credit, having so very bad a cause to sustain. Although he well knew that his client was as thorough a scoundrel as ever breathed, and that his condemnation would be a blessing to society, yet he pleaded his cause with all a lawyer's conscientiousness. When he got to the peroration, he managed to squeeze from his lachrymal glands a few rare tears, the last and most precious, I imagine, which he carefully reserved for an especially solemn occasion—just as some families preserve a few bottles of fine old wine, to be drunk at the marriage of a daughter or the coming of age of a son.

At length the case closed, and the president was going to sum up; but as the heat in court was excessive, and every one present stood in need of refreshment, leave was given to the jury to retire for half an hour, and the hall was cleared for the same space of time, in order that it might undergo a thorough ventilation. During this interval, while twelve of the jurors were cooling themselves with ices and sherbet, the Thirteenth lighted a cigar, and reclining in an arm-chair, smoked away with the gravity of a Turk.

'What a capital cigar!' sighed one of the jurors, as he watched with an envious eye the odoriferous little clouds escaping from the smoker's lips.

'Would you like to try one?' asked the major, politely offering his cigar-case.

'If it would not trespass too much on your kindness.'

'By no means. You are heartily welcome.'

The juror took a cigar, and lighted it at that of his obliging neighbour.

'Well! how do you like it?' asked the major.

'Delicious! It has an uncommonly pleasant aroma. From whence are you supplied?'

'From the Havannah.'

Several jurors now approached, casting longing glances on Major Vernor's cigar-case.

'Gentlemen,' said he, 'I am really grieved that I have not a single cigar left to offer you, having just given the last to our worthy friend. To-morrow, however, I hope to have a fresh supply, and shall then ask you to do me the honour of accepting some.'

At that moment, an official came in to announce that the court had resumed its sitting; the jury hastened to their box, and the president began his charge. Scarcely had he commenced, however, when the juror who had smoked the cigar rose, and in a trembling voice begged permission to retire, as he felt very ill. Indeed, while in the act of speaking, he fell backwards, and lay senseless on the floor.

The president, of course, directed that he should be carefully conveyed to his home, and desired Major Vernor to take his place. Six strokes sounded from the old clock of the Town-hall as the jury retired to deliberate on their verdict in the case of Pierre Granger.

Eleven gentlemen exclaimed with one voice, that the wretched assassin's guilt was perfectly clear, and that they could not hesitate for a moment as to their decision. Major Vernor, however, stood up, placed his back against the door, and regarding his colleagues with a peculiarly sinister expression, said slowly: 'I shall acquit Pierre Granger, and you shall all do the same!'

'Sir,' replied the foreman in a severe tone, 'you are answerable to your conscience for your own actions, but I do not see what right you have to offer us a gratuitous insult.'

'Am I, then, so unfortunate as to offend you?' asked the major meekly.

'Certainly; in supposing us capable of breaking the solemn oath which we have taken to do impartial justice. I am a man of honour'—

'Bah!' interrupted the major; 'are you quite sure of that?'

A general murmur of indignation arose.

'Do you know, sir, that such a question is a fresh insult?'

'You are quite mistaken,' said Major Vernor. 'What I said was drawn forth by a feeling of the solemn responsibility which rests on us. Before I can resolve to make a dead corpse of a living moving being, I must feel satisfied that both you and I are less guilty than Pierre Granger, which, after all, is not so certain.'

An ominous silence ensued; the major's words seemed to strike home to every breast; and at length one of the gentlemen said: 'You seem, sir, to regard the question in a philosophical point of view.'

'Just so, Monsieur Cerneau.'

'You know me then?' said the juror in a trembling voice.

'Not very intimately, my dear sir, but just sufficiently to appreciate your fondness for discounting bills at what your enemies might call usurious interest. I think it was about four years ago that an honest, poor man, the father of a large family, blew out his brains, in despair at being refused by you a short renewal which he had implored on his knees.'

Without replying, M. Cerneau retired to the furthest corner of the room, and wiped off the large drops of sweat which started from his brow.

'What does this mean?' asked another juror impatiently. 'Have we come hither to act a scene from the *Memoirs of the Devil*?'

'I don't know that work,' replied the major; 'but may I advise you, Monsieur de Bardine, to calm your nerves?'

'Sir, you are impertinent, and I shall certainly do myself the pleasure to chastise you.'

'As how?'

'With my sword. I shall do you the honour to meet you to-morrow.'

'An honour which, being a man of sense, I must beg respectfully to decline. You don't kill your adversaries, Monsieur de Bardine; you assassinate them. Have you forgotten your duel with Monsieur de Sillar, which took place, as I am told, without witnesses? While he was off his guard, you treacherously struck him through the heart. The prospect of a similar catastrophe is certainly by no means enticing.'

With an instinctive movement, M. de Bardine's neighbours drew off.

'I admire such virtuous indignation,' sneered the major. 'It especially becomes you, Monsieur Darin'—

'What infamy are you going to cast in my teeth?' exclaimed the gentleman addressed.

'Oh, very little—a mere trifle—simply, that while Monsieur de Bardine kills his friends, you only dishonour yours. Monsieur Simon, whose house, table, and purse are yours, has a pretty wife'—

'Major,' cried another juror, 'you are a villain!'

'Pardon me, my dear Monsieur Calfat, let us call things by their proper names. The only villain amongst us, I believe, is the man who himself set fire to his house, six months after having insured it at treble its value, in four offices, whose directors were foolish enough to pay the money without making sufficient inquiry.'

A stifled groan escaped from M. Calfat's lips as he covered his face with his hands.

'Who are you that you thus dare to constitute yourself our judge?' asked another, looking fiercely at Vernor.

'Who am I, Monsieur Pérou? simply one who can appreciate your very rare dexterity in holding court-cards in your hand, and making the dice turn up as you please.'

M. Pérou gave an involuntary start, and thenceforward held his peace. The scene, aided by the darkness of approaching night, had now assumed a terrific aspect. The voice of the major rang in the ears of eleven pale, trembling men, with a cold metallic distinctness, as if each word inflicted a blow.

At length Vernor burst into a strange sharp hissing laugh. 'Well, my honourable colleagues,' he exclaimed, 'does this poor Pierre Granger still appear to you unworthy of the slightest pity? I grant you he has committed a fault, and a fault which you would not have committed in his place. He has not had your cleverness in masking his turpitude with a show of virtue: that was his real crime. Now, if after having killed his wife, he had paid handsomely for masses to be said for her repose—if he had purchased a burial-ground, and caused to be raised to her memory a beautiful square white marble monument, with a flowery epitaph on it in gold letters—why, then, we should all have shed tears of sympathy, and eulogised Pierre Granger as the model of a tender husband. Don't you agree with me, Monsieur Norbec?'

M. Norbec started as if he had received an electric shock. 'It is false!' he murmured. 'I did not poison Eliza: she died of pulmonary consumption.'

'True,' said the major; 'you remind me of a circumstance which I had nearly forgotten. Madame Norbec, who possessed a large fortune in her own right, died without issue, five months after she had made you her sole legatee.' Then the major was silent. They were now in total darkness, and the throbbing of many agitated hearts might be heard in the room. Suddenly came the sharp click of a pistol, and the obscurity was for a moment brightened by a flash; but there was no report—the weapon had missed fire. The major burst into a long and loud fit of laughter. 'Charming! delightful! Ah, my dear sir,' he exclaimed, addressing the foreman, 'you were the only honest man of the

party, and see how, to oblige me, you have made an attempt on my person, which places you on an honourable level with Pierre Granger!' Then having rung the bell, he called for candles, and when they were brought, he said: 'Come, gentlemen, I suppose you don't want to sleep here; let us make haste, and finish our business.'

Ten minutes afterwards, the foreman handed in the issue paper—a verdict of not guilty; and Pierre Granger was discharged amid the hisses and execrations of the crowd, who, indeed, were prevented only by a strong military force from assaulting both judge and jury. Major Vernor coolly walked up to the dock, and passing his arm under that of Pierre Granger, went out with him through a side-door.

From that hour neither the one nor the other was ever seen again in the country. That night there was a terrific thunder-storm; the ripe harvest was beaten down by hailstones as large as pigeons' eggs, and a flash of lightning striking the steeple of the old ivy-covered church, tore down its gilded cross.

This strange story was related to me one day last year by a convict in the infirmary of the prison at Toulon. I have given it verbatim from his lips; and as I was leaving the building, the sergeant who accompanied me said: 'So, sir, you have been listening to the wonderful rhodomontades of Number 19,788?'

'What do you mean?—This history?—'

'Is false from beginning to end. Number 19,788 is an atrocious criminal, who was sent to the galleys for life, and who, during the last few months, has given evident proofs of mental alienation. His monomania consists chiefly in telling stories to prove that all judges and jurors are rogues and villains. He was himself found guilty, by a most respectable and upright jury, of having robbed and tried to murder Major Vernor. He is now about to be placed in a lunatic asylum, so that you will probably be the last visitor who will hear his curious inventions.'

'And who is Major Vernor?'

'A brave old half-pay officer, who has lived at Toulon, beloved and respected, during the last twelve years. You will probably see him to-day, smoking his Havannah cigar, after the table-d'hôte dinner, at the Crown Hotel.'

A DAY ON THE WHITADER.

A MORN of May—a valley on the south skirts of the Lammermuirs, in Berwickshire—two companions, one of them a country gentleman and my host, the other a friendly follower of science from the neighbouring town—the object of the party to have a ramble along the banks of the Whitader, and so on to the summit of Cockburn Law, a few miles distant. Such are the simple elements of the opening of my Day—a snatch of relaxation in the midst of busy city-life. The weather looks, on the whole, promising: at least, nobody is disposed to admit more than that 'there may be a shower—oh, of course—but nothing to speak of.' And some ladies are, by and by, to ride and to drive by a different way to meet us near the summit of the hill, though only on a strict promise from us gentlemen that there is to be no thunder. With the ladies are to come some solid comforts, to enable us to maintain existence till dinner-time.

At first, our course is over shingly *haughs* (plains skirting a river as so called in the north), memorials of havoc committed by the stream in the days of a late proprietor of the district, who, an old bachelor, used to say: 'Other men have wives to keep them in constant trouble through life; I have a water!' And most valiant was the fight he kept up through many years

with this pestilent stream; now hemming it in with a long embankment, like the Romans walling out the Picts; at another time, attempting to give it a more direct checkmate, by building jetties of piles and blocks half-way across its channel; of all of which structures it was sure to make ducks and drakes the first flood or *speat* next winter. A most troublesome set of neighbours are those mountain-streams, and so hypocritical too! You see, on a summer day, a tiny rill creeping among the pebbles, looking as if butter would not melt in its mouth; and yet this is the same entity which will come sweeping down at another time, a raging torrent, carrying off hay and corn, and sheep and cattle, cradles and old wives, and covering whole acre-breadths of rich land with stones and rubbish.

I wonder that men do not more readily see in such valleys as that I was threading, the record of an enormous space of time. It is of a very common form—namely, a trench cut by the water in a sandstone district. The walls, which everywhere rise up steeply on one side or the other, are sections of that kind of rock, from forty to eighty feet high, the space between varying from a quarter of a mile to half a mile wide. All this hollow is the work of the water. If we consider that it only works on those rare occasions of very high flood when it reaches these cliffs, and then makes an impression imperceptibly small, we must see that the time required for the whole operation must be truly vast—something in comparison with which the whole reach of our historical ages is but a mere trifle. And yet the time so chronicled is only one of many such spaces. Verily, it is a very old world this we live in!

It is the festival-day of the Ellem-ford Angling Club, and many of the members are to be seen wading in the stream in pursuit of their amusement. It is an unsocial amusement at all times; but even anglers lose reserve under the influence of success. We remark them to-day to be generally unconvivial, from which we become very sure that the trout are not taking well. In fact, the long continuance of dry weather—a whole April without a shower—has put the water into a bad state; and, besides, there is a blue sky, a hot sun, and no wind. None but simple fish will bite. Tam Hamilton himself would be at his wits' end on such a day. We feel a sly satisfaction, under these circumstances, in reflecting that the fish we seek for are not forbidden to us by any such accidents. And just now, we are passing under a cliff of the Old Red Sandstone formation, where the water leaves scarcely room for a rough path, strewn with fallen blocks; and, behold! in some of these masses are curious markings, which our scientific associate points out as scales of the *holoptychii*—fishes of the earliest type of their class, which lived when as yet there were no higher animals in the sea, and no land-animals of any kind at all. What a different fishing was this from that of the wading gentlemen aforesaid—and how little did they in general reflect, as they stumbled over these stones, what a rich mine of ideas lies entombed in them! This was the first spot in the south of Scotland where Devonian fossils, as they are comprehensively called, were found. The place is also interesting from what has happened to it in the *dynamics* of geology. It presents between the carboniferous formation of the lower part of the valley and the Silurian rocks of the neighbouring hills, a band of the Old Red, which has undergone some tremendous movement, there being a great *fault* between it and the former rocks, marked by a dense vein or dike of trap. On the other hand, there is a spot where the upturned edges of the Silurian or grawacke rocks are seen in the bed of the stream, with patches of the Old Red upon them at a different angle, the remains of the first deposits of the next formation, shewing how a change of inclination had taken place in the elder rocks before the next in order were laid down. A similar junction at Siccar Point on the coast is classic ground

in the science, from the remarks made upon it long ago by Hutton and Playfair.

Pass we on along the water-side—here enjoying the sparkle and rustle of the stream as it trots down a declivity, there speculating on the depth of a black pool which ever wheels round and round, with its burden of sticks and foam, emblem of a stupid, unprogressive mind: skirting fertile haughs, threading our way through rough plantings: here a sporting cottage smiles down from the top of the cliff, there a comfortable mill blocks up a narrow place in the valley: always the brown Lammermuirs onward. It is too soon for tree blossoms, almost for leaves; but to make up for this, constellations of primroses rise along the steep green forest-banks—something spontaneous and over and above—handed to us like a gift by Nature. And it is Scottish nature, for these green bushy steeps, with the primroses, are characteristic of our northern land. The birds keep up a continual festival. Ever and anon some curious feature in the crust of the earth turns up to view—as a trap or porphyry dyke crossing through the bed of the stream, rough and prominent there, but meet to the general surface on the country beyond the valley; or a strange flexure of the sandstone strata, a result of some laterally applied forces when all was soft and pliant. When geologists speculate on the causes of the form of the surface, where we see all the roughnesses and inequalities which *must* have once existed, reduced to one flowing smooth outline, they usually speak of *denudation*, or a cutting away of the surface, *by water*. But, behold! here is water cutting what it can in the channel of the stream; and the various masses are left more or less prominent and rough in proportion to their hardness or powers of resistance. The cause is manifestly inadequate to the effect, and another must be looked for. It is to be found in ice, which, in the glacier form, acts with so much more force and sharpness than water. One of our party was a valiant supporter of this assumed cause, and was continually pointing to the boulder clay immediately over the rocks at the summits of the cliffs, as the rubbish left by his glacial agent. *Non nostrum est*, however. We by and by reach the base of Cockburn Law, and commence an ascent of about 600 feet to the top, this eminence being between 1000 and 1100 feet above the sea in all. It is a tough pull of half an hour, and no one finds any fault with another when he turns round and calls admiration to the scenery of the Merse, and traces the Cheviots in the hazy distance to the south.

Attaining the top at length, we are repaid for our trouble by an immensely wide prospect in all directions: to the north, an indefinite series of the flat heathy hills of Lammermuir; to the south, the whole plain of the Tweed, from Eildon's tops, near Melrose, to the sail-studded sea at Berwick. The Law being, notwithstanding its small elevation, a conspicuous hill, has been early selected as a post of security and defence, and we still find remains of ancient circumvallations round the summit. Such is the condition of nearly all conspicuous hill-summits in the inhabited parts of Scotland, leading the mind to a time when the people must have been in a state of great simplicity and barbarism—harbouring in these rude fortifications against their Roman or Scandinavian invaders, as the Caffres did lately in their kloofs against the British. What a change to the time when we see the adjacent plain the seat of a large, industrious, and comfortable population! The tradition of the district is, that the unfortunate Picts, whose kingdom was suppressed in the ninth century, made their last stand in the fortified summit of Cockburn Law. The common people remark that, in consequence of having thus been so long occupied a thousand years ago, the top of the Law is to this day greener than its sides; which certainly is a fact, however it may be accounted for. Near the top of the

hill we found the ladies and one or two gentlemen, with the materials of lunch; but just at this time a sponge-like cloud began to discharge itself upon us in a most provoking manner, sunshine evidently prevailing not above half a mile off. Patience, however, enabled us to overcome this difficulty, which wholly vanished ere-long, and we then had our viands spread out on the heath. The usual juncundity of gipsying parties prevailed for a space, and then we set out for a spot about a mile off, where a most remarkable antiquarian curiosity is to be seen.

On a sloping platform on the north face of the hill, screened from the low country by intervening high ground, we see some rude heaps of stones surrounded by certain appearances of turfy walls; and on a near inspection we find these to be the remains of a considerable fortress. The central and principal object has been an annular or ring-shaped building, of about thirty yards diameter, the wall being from five to six in thickness, through which a narrow passage gives access to an interior court. It has been built of dry stones, large and small, adjusted so as to make tolerably good masonry of its kind. The original height is unknown: in the latter end of the last century, it was still seven or eight feet high; but now we can only with some difficulty trace the base of the wall amidst the rubbish. The most curious peculiarity was, that in the thickness of the wall were recesses entering laterally on each hand from the passage, as well as from three other openings from the inner court; thus eight recesses in all—being so many little chambers or cells in which human beings might have lived, although in a most comfortless state. It is worthy of note, that these little rooms were roofed by gradually contracting the walls towards the top, and laying a slab across, the arch not being then invented. To the east of this tower, as it might be called, are the bases of four lesser and weaker circular buildings, connected with each other by walls; and around the whole group extends, in an oval form, a double circumvallation with trenches.

The history of the building is totally unknown. The ordinary name is Eetin's Hald; though usually presented in books as Edin's Hall or Ha'. Antiquaries speculate on its having been a palace of Edwin, king of Northumbria in the seventh century—the same prince from whom Edinburgh is supposed (altogether gratuitously) to have taken its name. It is to be feared that here an obvious meaning of the name has been overlooked. The Etin, in old Scottish tradition, is a giant (from the Danish *Jetten*): thus we hear in our early national literature, of the tale of the *Red Etin*.* Sir David Lyndsay, in his *Dreme*, speaks of having amused the infancy of King James V. with 'tales of the Red Etin and Gyre-carling.' Considering that the people of Lammermuir have a fireside story representing Eetin's Hald as having been anciently the abode of a giant, who lived upon the cattle of his neighbours, and did not always respect their own persons—whose leap, too, they shew in a narrow part of the streamlet near by—it is rather strange that the name of the place has not been detected as meaning merely the *Giant's Hold*. We have no doubt whatever that the name is this and no more. It has been conferred by the peasantry after they had forgotten every fact of the actual history of the building, and had no similar buildings in use among themselves to keep them in right ideas regarding it; they consequently dreamed a history for it, as the stronghold of one of those savage beings, of enormous stature and strength, who figure in the fabulous annals of every imaginative people. We see here, however, additional proof of the very great antiquity of the structure.

In the southern districts of Scotland, Eetin's Hald is

* See *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*, 3d. ed. 'p. 213.

quite a unique object; but in the extreme north, and in the Orkney and Zetland islands, there are other ancient fortalices of the same form and character, usually called duns or burghs, and attributed to the Picts. In *Cordner's Antiquities* is given the ground-plan of one called *Dunalishaig*, on the Firth of Dornoch, in Ross-shire, precisely resembling Eetin's Hald, as far as its base is concerned, but having also a second story similarly chambered, which of course may have been the case with Eetin's Hald also, for anything we can tell. It is understood that the most entire of all the duns now standing is that of Moussa, on a small island in the Zetland group. As there are no such buildings in Scandinavia, it is considered as tolerably certain that they were the production of a people holding the north of Scotland before the invasions of the Northmen in the ninth and tenth centuries—in short, of the Celtic people, or Picts, for to them is the latter term now found applicable. When these Celts occupied the whole of Scotland, they would raise such buildings everywhere; but of all south of Inverness-shire, Eetin's Hald alone survives. It must therefore be deemed a great curiosity, and we cannot but recommend that measures should be taken to clear it of rubbish, and preserve all that remains with scrupulous care. Were the interior court trenched for a few feet, there would probably be found weapons of stone, flint and bone implements, and other relics of the primitive inhabitants.

But now the westering sun, streaming down in powerful radiance upon some of the distant hills of Selkirkshire, admonishes us that we must hie to the good town of Dunse, in order to dine with the angling-club, for such is the fixed arrangement. Horses and the car help us to make out this point, and we reach Hownam's Inn just in time. We need scarcely add, in the paragraphist's phrase, that the evening was spent in the utmost hilarity.

I could not but reflect afterwards—trivial as was the occasion for the idea arising—how much benefit one may derive on an excursion like this from a certain preparedness of mind. Even with a very small amount of scientific knowledge—and I can pretend to no more—how much better off are you than in a state of entire ignorance. A person altogether unacquainted with geology and its kin science archaeology would have, on this occasion, lacked many enjoyments which, as it was, fell to my share. Nearly at every step along the valley, I had objects to gratify curiosity, to elevate and expand the view of the mind, to connect the immediate with the remote, and often to send the heart in grateful adoration to the source of all good. The very forms of the hills—the ground everywhere prominent in simple proportion to the hardness of its composition—led the imagination to a wondrous crisis in the history of the globe, when the temperature of Prince Regent's Inlet must have prevailed as far south as Vienna, and but a small part of the surface was fitted to be a theatre of life. Even when, turning from the distant silent ages of the geologist, we came to the early lisping days of our own race, what a curious theme of meditation! The hill-fort, representing a state of society like that of Caffreland—the ring-castle, without mortar or the arch, speaking of a time when the people of our land were just advanced in arts and means about as much as the Peruvians when discovered by Pizarro; these objects, in contrast with the Britain of our own age, were calculated to awaken most interesting trains of reflection. Now, of all this the holiday excursion of the ignorant man gives nothing. Things are to him merely what their surface tells to his eye. He can but hear the birds sing and the waters tinkle; and, literally—

The primrose by the water's brim,
A yellow primrose is to him,
And it is nothing more!

A LIVING PICTURE.

'Her children arise up and call her blessed: her husband also, and he praiseth her.'

No, I'll not say your name.—I have said it now—
As you, mine—first in childish treble tuned,
Up through a score of dear familiar years,
Till baby-voices mock us. Time may come
When your tall sons look down on our white hair,
Smiling to hear us call each other thus,
And, curious, ask about the old, old days,
The marvellous days—days when we two were young.

How far off seems that time, and yet how near!

Now, as I lie and watch you come and go
With handfuls of spring greenery, in soft robe
Just girled, and brown curls that girl-like fall,
And straw-hat flapping in the April wind—
I could forget these many years—start up,
Crying: 'Come, let's go play!'

Well-a-day, friend,

Our playing is all done!

Still, let us smile;
For as you flit about with these same flowers,
You look like a spring morning, thrilled with light,
And on your lips a bright invisible bird
Sits, singing its gay heart out in old tunes;
While, an embodied music, moves your step,
Your free, wild, springy step, like corn i' the wind.
Gazing on you, I see young Atala,
Or Pocahontas, noble child o' the sun,
Or Lady Geraldine, her 'Courtship' o'er,
Moves through the dark aëles.

But I'll not prate:

Fair seemeth fairest, ignorant 'tis fair;
That light incredulous laugh is worth a world!
That laugh—with soft child-echoes—

Nay then, fade,

Vague dream! Come, true and pure reality:
Come, dewy dawn of wifehood, motherhood,
Broadening to golden day. Come, silent round
Of simple joys, sweet duties, happy cares,
When each full hour drops bliss with liberal hand,
Yet leaves to-morrow richer than to-day.

Will you sit here? The grass is summer warm;
Look, how those children love the daisy-stars;
So did we too, do you mind? That eldest lad,
He has your very mouth. Yet, you will have't,
His eyes are like his father's? Well; even so!
They could not be more dark, and deep, and kind.

Do you know, this hour I have been fancying you
A poet's dream, and almost sighed to think
There was no poet to praise you—

Why, you're flown

After those wild elves in the flower-beds there!
Ha, ha! you're human now.

So best—so best:

Mine eyelids drop, content, o'er moistened eyes—
I would not have you other than you are.

A SPIDER'S WEB.

On stepping out of the house, my attention was attracted by a spider's web covering the whole of a large lemon-tree nearly. The tree was oval, and well shaped; and the web was thrown over it in the most artistic manner, and with the finest effect. Broad flat cords were stretched out, like the cords of a tent, from its circumference to the neighbouring bushes; and it looked as if some genius of the lamp, at the command of its master, had exhausted taste and skill to cover with this delicate drapery the rich-looking fruit beneath. I think the web would have measured full ten yards in diameter.—*Herndon's Valley of the Amazon.*

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